

## Course Description

### Picturing Magic

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<b>Dates</b>	Saturdays 21 and 28 October; 4, 11, 18 and 25 November 2017
<b>Times</b>	10.30–13.30
<b>Location</b>	Harry M Weinrebe Learning Centre
<b>Level</b>	All levels
<b>Class size</b>	Maximum 16 participants

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#### Course Description

*Harry Potter: A History of Magic* reveals centuries of fantastical illustrations from the Library's collections and beyond. Be inspired by the magical works on display and develop your own fantasy-based illustrations over six weeks of artist-led workshops. You'll learn the fundamentals of good illustration and how best to bring your ideas to life on paper – then bind your artwork in a compendium that holds everything you have imagined and depicted.

Each week we'll focus on different materials and techniques, introducing you to a wide range of tools and methods employed by professional illustrators. Throughout the course we'll take inspiration from key themes represented in the exhibition – from magical plants to creatures and objects – as well as from illustrators past and present who work in the fantasy genre. You'll also hear from the curators of *Harry Potter: A History of Magic* on an exclusive tour of the exhibition, and from guest specialists who'll introduce key skills and illustration techniques.

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#### Week 1: Sowing the Magical Seeds

We'll sow the seeds of imagination with an exclusive curator-led tour of *Harry Potter: A History of Magic* to kick-start our creativity. Back in the studio, we'll then focus on magical plants, looking closely at herbology manuscripts and other examples of botanical illustration to help us develop our own imaginative designs for fantastical herbs, roots and flowers. We'll consider what magical properties our plants will have, and how these are communicated through the way they look, how they grow and how they might be harvested and used.

#### Week 2: Cultivating an Enchanted Garden

Developing our designs from week one, in our second session we'll apply traditional botanical illustration techniques, particularly the careful and delicate use of watercolour painting, to add vibrancy and detail to our creations. We'll also be joined by lettering artist and calligrapher Ruth Rowland, who'll help us develop evocative and decorative script using brushes, dip-pens and inks, for annotating our illustrations in this and future sessions.

#### Week 3: Creating a Magical Menagerie

In week three we'll turn our attention to fantastical creatures. You'll consider how different cultures have depicted magical animals through history, and use collage to great effect in developing your own imaginative beasts. You'll also look at the nuts and bolts of illustrating animals through activities that will help you understand basic animal anatomy, and how to draw it effectively.

#### **Week 4: The Beast Roared**

In week four we'll develop our fantasy animals by focusing on composition, viewpoint and posture to help us create the most dramatic and engaging illustrations for our magical menagerie. You'll be guided on how to refine anatomical detail, apply colour effectively using watercolour and gouache paints, and use light and shade to give your creatures volume and visual impact.

#### **Week 5: In the Darkness it Sparkled**

In week five we'll turn our attention to magical objects, and introduce simple narrative elements to our illustrations. Inspired by what we've seen in the exhibition, we'll develop concepts for magical artifacts and consider how to depict them in action so that our illustrations not only depict the object itself, but tell a story for the viewer. For instance, communicating through a single image a magical object, and also its effects on the user. We'll use a range of materials to bring our illustrations to life.

#### **Week 6: The Forbidden Library**

We'll finish our course by bringing together all of our fantastical illustrations and binding them into a magical book to take home. Whether it's a bestiary or botanical compendium, you'll design and create a cover image that best reflects the illustrations you've made during the course. We'll then be joined by artist bookbinder Shelagh McCarthy who'll help us create our books using traditional binding techniques, before finishing with an informal group critique and reflection.

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#### **Tutors**

This course is led by **Sion Ap Tomos**. Sion is an illustrator, designer and educator. A graduate of Central Saint Martins and the Royal College of Art, he has been teaching drawing and illustration for 15 years at various institutions including Central Saint Martins, House of Illustration, the National Portrait Gallery and the Design Museum.

**Ruth Rowland** is a lettering artist and illustrator. She creates bespoke hand lettering, calligraphy and handwriting for books, magazines, albums and posters, amongst many other projects. She works globally for a wide range of clients including the BBC, Virgin Records, Coca-Cola, Heathrow Airport, Country Living Magazine, Penguin Random House, and many more.

**Shelagh McCarthy** is a bookbinder and printmaker with a wealth of experience teaching adults with a broad range of abilities. As well as regularly contributing to the British Library's learning programmes, she has designed and led creative workshops and courses for various London institutions including Central Saint Martins, the British Museum, Battersea Arts Centre and *The Guardian* Education Centre.

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#### **Previous skills, knowledge or experience**

None required. A willingness to experiment with different media and techniques will help you get the most from this course.

#### **Equipment and materials**

Please bring an A4 cartridge paper sketch pad (recommended 130gms paper) on which to work each week, preferably with detachable pages. All other materials will be provided.

#### **Facilities and refreshments**

Please note that the Learning Centre will open to participants 15 minutes before the stated start time. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided at each session.

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